



U.S. Department of Justice

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MEDIA RELEASE

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“OPERATION BEANTOWN”

**NINTH CONVICTION IN MANCHESTER CRACK COCAINE
DISTRIBUTION RING**

Re: United States v. Hazel “Pee Wee” Burton

CONCORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE -- United States Attorney Tom Colantuono, N.H. State Police Colonel Gary Sloper, and Manchester Police Chief John Jaskolka announced that Hazel “Pee Wee” Burton, 48, of Manchester, NH was convicted today of crack cocaine distribution charges.

BURTON entered a guilty plea before U.S. District Judge Steven J. McAuliffe to an indictment alleging that he distributed quantities of crack cocaine in Manchester, New Hampshire on several occasions during 2002. Judge McAuliffe released BURTON to the supervision of the U.S. Department of Probation pending her sentencing hearing scheduled for November 24, 2003 in the U.S. District Court in Concord. BURTON faces a potential maximum sentence of 20 years imprisonment.

BURTON was arrested by Manchester and New Hampshire State Police along with eleven others, as part of their joint “Operation Beantown” investigation, so named because of its focus on alleged Boston-based drug traffickers that had relocated to Manchester. Eight others have been sentenced in connection with the investigation, including:

- Raheem “Ruckus” Rice (90 months);
- Michael “Mook” Martin (65 months);
- Antwone “Sticks” Cousins (56 months);
- Taranne “Black” Tillis (46 months);
- Roderick “Shawn” Echols (46 months);
- Maria Miranda (37 months);
- Tarrell Burris (30 months); and
- Justin “Styles” Foote (12 months).

U.S. Attorney Colantuono stated, “This case demonstrates our office’s commitment to aggressively prosecuting drug traffickers, including the street-level crack dealers operating in Manchester and New Hampshire’s other larger cities. Operation Beantown is a prime example of the effectiveness of cooperative efforts between federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies in combating the disastrous impact of crack cocaine on our urban neighborhoods and their residents. This office will continue to commit federal resources to these efforts.”

The conviction resulted from a joint investigation conducted by the Manchester Police Department’s Special Investigations Unit and the N.H. State Police Narcotics Investigation Unit. The prosecution is being handled by Assistant United States Attorney Joseph N. Laplante, the District of New Hampshire’s Lead Attorney on the New England Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (New England OCDETF).